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COMMUNICATION OF 18 SEPTEMBER 1998 RECEIVED FROM THE PERMANENT MISSION OF AFGHANISTAN TO THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

The text of a letter dated 18 September 1998 submitted by the Government of Afghanistan which the Director General has received from the Permanent Mission of Afghanistan is - as requested - reproduced for the attention of the General Conference.

"I have the honour to state below in reference to your note of 16-07-1998 the remorse of the Government of the Islamic State of Afghanistan of its failure to comply with Article XIX.A of the Agency's Statute.

Afghanistan has witnessed twenty agonizing years of war, particularly the last 6 which left the country impoverished, the factories in ruins and the capital in ashes, not to mention the de facto aggression by Pakistan. Due to the gravity of the latter period, it obviously was impossible for the Government to meet its obligations and regularly pay its contributions to the United Nations International Atomic Energy Agency.

Hence, I would like to draw your attention to the last part of Article XIX.A of the Statute that reads: "The General Conference may, nevertheless, permit such a member to vote if it is satisfied that the failure to pay is due to conditions beyond the control of the member".

Afghanistan is one such country whose extreme condition earned international acknowledgement and therefore should be allowed to practise its voting right until the situation recuperates.

I would appreciate if you, Sir, could give the above statement your best consideration and as the 42nd session of the General Conference is about to be opened, kindly restore the voting right of Afghanistan only if election is to take place."*

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* It is suggested that, pursuant to Rule 42(b) of the Conference's Rules of Procedure and in line with past practice, this request be referred to the General Committee for consideration.